

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

NO. 447. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JUNE 23, 1877.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCHILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

OVERTURE. I. DEEPWEALD.

CHAPTER III. PARADISE AND THE PERI.

How does a needle feel under the force of a magnet through a thin but impenetrable barrier? Very much, probably, like Celia March on Thursday afternoon. She was drawn by Mademoiselle Clari with magnetic force; but between them stood her father's "No." She had not one thought of the remotest possibility of disobedience, but a burning restlessness drove her to approach the magnet as near as the barrier allowed. So it happened that at two o'clock she was walking—by one of those accidents which are not accidental—along the Fore-street past the Shire Hall. She passed the building twice; and then, remembering that it was against the whole Deepweald code of propriety for a young lady to promenade the Fore-street alone after marketing hours, turned into a draper's shop at the corner of College-yard—another accident of the same sort, which gave her an excellent post for seeing the audience arrive. Here she stood, a Peri at the gate, to watch the happier souls pass into their sinful beatitude. Nay, she felt even more forlorn than the Peri; her longing surpassed even what Bessy Swann would have felt, had she been forbidden to go to a dance at the Deanery.

"Of course you are going to hear the singing, Miss March?" asked the girl at the counter. "I wish I could go too—Lady Quorne and Mrs. Harding are to be

there, so it must be something particular. What can I serve you with to-day?"

Celia was ashamed to say she was not going, and sympathised intensely with what she took for granted must be the fellow feelings of her sister-sufferer.

"No—yes—I want a pair of gloves, please," she said; which was true. For she had come out without gloves, and her hands, thanks to her father's system of manual training, were not beautiful enough to dispense with them.

"Primrose, of course, like Lady Quorne? She always wears primrose; and I've sold three dozen pair this very morning. Ah, if there isn't her very carriage! and she's in it her own self—think of that, now!"

The young lady threw down her stock of gloves on the counter and hurried to the shop-door. "But whose carriage is that?" she said, yet more excitedly. "Why, it's—no, it isn't—yes—no—yes—if it isn't the Marchioness! Well, you are in luck's way, Miss March. You'll be in the very same room with the Marchioness and can look at her all the time. Well, I do envy you—fancy that, now!"

Celia looked, and saw a large close carriage drawn by two large gray horses; and—for she was unable to help learning something at the Dorcas meetings—was by no means unimpressed by the fact that the glory of Mademoiselle Clari had drawn all the way to Deepweald a stout, middle-aged, and highly respectable lady of retired habits, who was not seen in the town once in three years. The quiet, sleepy old city seemed to have grown metropolitan for the hour; and what must this Mademoiselle Clari be, who had roused it up even more effectually than the high sheriff's trumpeters at assize time?

She took the gloves, paid for them, and went into the street again—not down the yard, as she ought to have done. Not only was she still drawn towards the Shire Hall, but she was ashamed, in sight of the glove-girl, to go in any other direction. The shy dread of being thought singular is no evidence of moral cowardice at her age. A little crowd formed a lane across the pavement, to watch the great people as they left their carriages. Celia could not, of course, stand among the crowd, so she followed some strangers, for there were not a few county people in Deepweald to-day, up the steps and into the vestibule.

Miss Madox passed her with a nod, which made her so ashamed of her meaningless presence in the vestibule and of the incongruity of her dress with the most brilliant toilette-show ever seen in Deepweald, that she shrank into a dark corner behind the temporary ticket-office, there to wait for the way home to be clear again. Most of the company passed straight on; scarcely any had put off ticket-buying till the last moment. At last, however, the vestibule was empty, and she had nothing to do but walk out boldly from her corner, and go straight home, without fear of being seen by the most prying eyes in all the town.

"Give me a ticket, please," she suddenly heard spoken from just in front of the official pigeon-hole.

Well might she start to hear it—the voice was her own! The young man at the pigeon-hole did not faint on the spot at this outrageous piece of reckless and audacious rebellion. He was a stranger to the city; so he just looked at her dress, and said:

"Shilling?"

"Yes," she panted out. She could not turn back now; the deed was done. The man gave her the ticket; she felt for her money, and found that the purchase of her primrose gloves had left her exactly the sum of fivepence halfpenny.

She had been guilty of the hitherto unimaginable sin of disobedience, and had been guilty in vain. She had sinned, and had not even grasped the passing delight of the sin. Nobody who has ever been in the like case will wonder at her next proceeding. She was but a child, and it was too hard. She suddenly felt a round ball in her throat, and burst into tears.

"Allo! Vat is all dis?" said a sharp voice behind her. "Vy veep you, eh? Vat have you here?"

She glanced up, though wishing that the pavement would swallow up herself, her sin, and her shame, and saw before her a fat, clean-shaven foreigner in a furled cloak and eccentric hat, with many-ringed red hands, coarsely humorous lips, and a pair of amazingly quick and ill-tempered gray eyes. With those he was staring at her hard, and each stare felt like a flash of lightning.

"Aha! Siete Italiana?" he asked her. "No? Then how dare you have two big eyes like that and a skin like to café au lait? Vy veep you, eh?" he said again, with a short impatient stamp. "Is it that you are a post or a fish, Mademoiselle?"

"The young lady couldn't pay for her ticket, sir," said the young man at the pigeon-hole.

"I—I wanted to hear Mademoiselle Clari, sir," stammered Celia as well as she could. "And—I suppose I was vexed—that's all."

"Aha? Excellent! You cry to hear la Clari! Zat shall go ze round of paper—zat shall be in ze Times, zat a young lady cry because she cannot hear la Clari! Yes, so sure as I am Prosper! Mademoiselle, I zank you zat you cry so well. It is an avertissement—vat you call a pouff! Oh yes, you shall hear la Clari; you pay by your veeps, your dears. She will love to hear she have made you cry. Come—you shall follow me."

"No—sir—please!" she was beginning; longing, honestly at last, to run away, and yet unable to move.

"But I say you shall!" he said, angrily. "I am master here. La Clari herself dares not say no to Prosper. If you shall not come, I shall make you veep again—you comprehend? Vipe up your veep, and—hark, zey begin! Come."

As he spoke, her ears just caught the far-off echo of a violin; she followed—what else was a timid girl to do? Her guide almost thrust her into a seat at the back of the gallery, out of sight; for her appearance was by no means such as to ornament the room. She was too much distressed at first to realise what was going on; but presently a rattle of the ferrules of parasols on the floor woke an echo in her. She ventured to look between the two heads immediately in front, and saw, standing at the edge of the platform, one whom she knew at once, without being told, to be Mademoiselle Clari.

CHAPTER IV. CLARI SINGS.

BUT it was more than the Mademoiselle Clari of her invisible dreams—the Clari whom the bells had chimed, the organ pealed, the clock ticked, and the rooks cawed. She saw—and it is with Celia's eyes, be it remembered, not our own, that we also see—a real queen, with the features of a real goddess made of cream and crimson roses, as young as she was lovely, and with golden hair, like a saint's glory in the east window of the cathedral. Her large eyes, indeed, being of dark brown, matched neither her hair nor her complexion, apart from the sanction of fashion; but this was only a piquant discord, that seemed to give character. Her costume, Celia felt, was equally effective—a tragic robe of black velvet and very old lace, set with sparkling lights, that might be diamonds if they were not stars. Immediately in front of her, below the platform, sat the Marchioness of Horchester and the Countess of Quorne; but, great ladies they really were, semi-regal as they were in Deepweald, Celia thought them but very poor specimens of earthly grandeur beside the royalty that streamed from Mademoiselle Clari; a proud smile, thought Celia, but as sweet as it was proud. In the beauty of the sight, she forgot to expect the song.

BUT the song came, and straightway Celia's soul was carried away into a new world. The composer of this, we may be sure, had cared nothing for the old and extinct *maestri*, whom John March ranked among the prophets and apostles. This was music such as the living world loves, and Celia was thrown at once into passionate sympathy with all the world. She only felt that it was beautiful—and it was beautiful. She was carried into a universe far from Deepweald Cathedral and her father's organ. Her judgment went adrift from its moorings and drove to sea, full sail. She knew, thanks to her father, what singing means; but had Mademoiselle Clari sung even as badly as her father's pupils, it would have been all the same. It was the music itself, and the divine soprano voice—these were a revelation.

IT was all over, so it seemed, before it had fairly begun; long before Celia had time to be conscious that she was enjoying what she heard. She did not seek to know the name of the song. Seraphs' songs have no names. The song was Mademoiselle Clari, and Mademoiselle Clari was the song. Celia's heart throbbed painfully with ex-

citement, and her eyes filled with tears of joy. No wonder that marchionesses and countesses came to pass an hour in heaven when it condescended to visit Deepweald.

THE end of the song was lost in a burst of premature applause. Even this added to Celia's excitement, for she had never heard music in public before, and took the natural pleasure that people find in making a noise for an irresistible and spontaneous impulse of enthusiastic admiration. Not that she could have shown her admiration in that way, but none the less her heart was in the hands of her fellow-town-people. The homely citizens of Deepweald seemed transformed into worshippers at a solemn function, where the high priestess was Mademoiselle Clari. Celia's eyes, as well as they could pierce through a mist that half-blinded them, hung still upon the platform where the heroine of song stood bowing with a gracious smile, in which she seemed to read, "Yes; this is a miracle to you, but it is my native air—I am at home."

THE rest of the concert floated by like a dream. The spirit of the prima donna inspired it all. Whenever and while she sang, all was glory; when she was silent, her echo remained. Barely five minutes seemed to have passed when the bulk of the audience rose, more eager to go away than it had been to come. Celia alone lingered till the very last note, that she might live out the whole of the dream—instinctively trying, as practised dreamers do in sleep, to put off the evil moment of waking. But at last, hardly knowing what had been happening to her, she found herself in the crowded vestibule again. The weather was still at broiling point, but the air from the street struck her as chill and damp, and not at all like the familiar air of Deepweald. Indeed it would have been in no wise strange to her if she had found that the whole city, during the concert, had flown away, and if she had emerged straight from the temple of music into fairyland.

"Ah, Miss March," said Miss Bessy Swann, as the stream from the stalls met the stream from the gallery at the bottom of the stairs; "I was certain you would be here, somewhere. Where is Mr. March? I suppose this is a good concert, isn't it? All the county was here, I declare!"

"And her diamonds!" said her mother. "That Clari's, I mean; I've seen Lady Quorne's, and they're nothing to them. I

wonder if they're all real. Do you know if they're real, Mr. Gaveston?"

"I remember reading in some paper," said the curate, "that the Emperor of Russia, or somebody, gave her a diamond brooch that cost ten thousand pounds."

"Ten thousand pounds—fancy! How beautifully she must sing, to be sure! And she's a handsome woman, too. I wonder if she's got a husband, and if he's fond of her."

"Fond of a wife that brings him in ten thousand pound a song?" said Mr. Swann, who had come to meet his wife and daughter. "He's a fool if he ain't, that's all I can say. Thank you, Gaveston, for looking after my women folk. But I can't swallow that ten thousand pound, somehow. Why, it's twice the bishop's whole income. Ten thousand farthings, more likely—you mustn't believe in all the aughts you see in the papers. However, I'm glad you've enjoyed yourselves, and aren't quite stewed away this hot weather. You look uncommonly warm, Miss Celia. However, there's no accounting for tastes. As I always say, give me a fife-and-drum band out in the open."

"It is not proper," said Miss Hayward, who was suffering from a seat too far away from the Swann party, and was therefore not inclined to praise without discrimination, "it is decidedly improper for ladies to accept presents from gentlemen to whom they are not engaged; and if the engagement is broken off, they ought to return them on both sides. I never heard that the Emperor of Russia was ever engaged to an opera-singer, Mr. Gaveston. But of course he may have been, and then of course I have nothing to say. I daresay her diamonds are real, but it doesn't follow her complexion's the same. Those singers know how to make themselves up, I daresay; and I, for one, never saw that straw-coloured hair go with those gravy-coloured sort of eyes before."

"I have it!" said the curate, suddenly. "I knew Clari's face put me in mind of somebody's, but I couldn't think who. It was her eyes. They are just like yours, Miss March—they might be the same."

Miss Hayward smiled grimly, and even Bessy Swann did not look displeased. It was not disagreeable to hear another girl's eyes likened to eyes which had just been likened to gravy. That was very different from suggesting that they were hazel.

Celia had heard all this after-concert chatter with her ears, but understood it so

little as not even to feel its cold water. Her head was one whirl of new-found song, or rather of what was both new and nameless if the cold, calm music she studied at home was named song. The very cathedral tower, and the familiar caw of the rooks as they sailed home after their day's foray, looked and sounded unreal. She seemed to notice them consciously for the first time. She felt even past repentance.

"If he had really known all," she thought of her father, "he would have been there."

But she trembled, nevertheless, as she entered the brick house in the close, at the thought of the coming question, "Celia, where have you been?" Happily, or unhappily, she had a respite; her father was not taking advantage of a long afternoon to himself to add a demi-semiquaver to his score, but was occupied with a pupil whose parents, unluckily for him, objected to public entertainments on something they called principle. Celia heard the smothered, wavering voice of the only young lady in all Deepweald who was not taking a half-holiday; and oh, how contemptible it sounded! Surely such creatures should be forbidden to learn, she thought, not remembering that the chirp of that poor amateur, the sparrow, is as much music at heart as the song of the nightingale. She could not spend the few minutes left of her reprieve at her own piano. She could only sit down at the window and wait, knowing that nothing would prevent her father's reading at one glance all her guilt in her eyes. Never, with all his severity, had she been afraid to meet him before. Hitherto, his law had been one with her will. But, to-day, there was fear far beyond that of a disobedient child. She feared she was not sorry for her sin. As Thekla thought "I have lived and loved," so Celia found reckless consolation in "I have heard Mademoiselle Clari." Great delights must needs be followed by great punishments. Let them come. Meanwhile, she tried to set to the music of fancy what Mademoiselle Clari must be feeling. How great, surely, must be her ecstasy at having kindled an artistic passion in the people of Deepweald! How humbly proud must she be for having been chosen as the greatest earthly instrument of such an art as hers! What unbroken joy must be her life, who carried with her on earth the very glory whereof heaven itself is said to be made—the glory

of song! What perfect harmony her soul must be!

"Celia," said the organist very gravely.

She started, trembled, and felt her cheeks on fire.

"Celia," he said again, "speak as softly as you can."

She saw a troubled look upon his usually emotionless face that did not seem to concern her own fears. Nevertheless, it must concern them, for conscience told her so.

"Yes," she said. "Why do you want me to speak softly?"

"Was that your usual voice? Or was it louder?"

"It was my usual voice."

"Do you never speak differently to me?"

"Never."

"Celia! You are relieving me from a horrible fear! I could hardly catch a word of the sermon last Sunday. And Miss Green, who had just gone, sang as if she were under a feather-bed. In fact—I mean that a musician had better die than grow deaf, Celia."

The fire of guilty fear in her face died out in a moment; Mademoiselle Clari herself was as clean forgotten as if she had never sung. Her days had been far too barren of life to hint at the thought of death, far less of any greater change in their absolute monotony. For the instant, she could no more realise what her father meant, than a little child when it first hears people talk about dying; and yet she felt herself turn pale, though rather at the first shadow of unknown change than at the thought of its form. His tone was enough for that; but how could she even imagine her father deprived of the sense which was his very being? The faintest thought of change in him had never entered her head since she was born; it was too immense, as well as too strange, to find its way in without much more than a moment's struggle.

"No," she said eagerly, rather answering some terrible and formless presentiment than her father's words. "Nobody can ever listen to Canon Jones's sermons or Miss Green's songs—I can't; nobody can. I was speaking lower than usual—I was, indeed. The cathedral is full of draughts—"

"No; it is not fancy. You half-relieved me for a moment, but—I have not caught cold. I don't know what such a thing means. Jones may preach dull rubbish, and he does; but he bellows it. And your voice is no real test at all; it is too familiar

to me. I have been trying not to fear this for months past—well, the fear is over; the thing has come. Bring me my score."

She had never known him show emotion but once; and that was when he had broken out into a passion at the name of Clari. He showed none now. But the absolute quietness of such a man, under the thought of such a doom, sank over her like a cloud, in which she began at last to realise what such a doom must mean—and for him! And for his work, that he might never hear!

"Come?" she almost whispered.

"Yes—to-day."

"And only because Miss Green——"

"No. As you say, nobody can hear Miss Green. It is you—you, Celia—that I have not been able to hear! I kept my door ajar, but all the morning I heard your voice as you practised less and less plainly till three hours ago. I made a note of the very moment when I heard you no more. Well, Heaven's will be done. I must only get on all the faster. I shall have lived long enough when I have heard that. Bring me my score."

"Oh!" cried Celia, with a breathless burst of joy, "you were only afraid because you did not hear me?"

"Is not that enough? With all your faults, and they are thousands, you can make yourself heard. Bring——"

"Oh, I am so glad! You heard nothing because—there was nothing to hear!"

"What!" he exclaimed suddenly, "you have lost a day?"

Even then the system could not yield. John March's hearing concerned John March; but Celia's days concerned the work—which was infinitely more.

"No!" she said. "I have not lost a day—I have gained years—I have heard Mademoiselle Clari——"

She stopped, thunderstruck. She had braved a scolding—but what spell was there even in the name of Clari to let loose a storm? The whole face, nay, the whole figure of the organist burst out into a blaze of anger—or rather into that deeper rage of a beaten man which is called despair. She could not recognise even his voice as at last, after a very tempest of silence, he burst out:

"Her! You have heard her!"

No pen can mock the rage and scorn he threw into the words. Could this be a mere artist's passion? But how could Celia tell? How could she think, even?

She could only tremble all over, as if from the effects of an actual blow.

"What—what have I done?" she tried to stammer faintly.

"Fool, to think even Deepweald safe from her! Yes; you have heard—I see your eyes; you have drunk poison. And in one year more—who knows? But it shall not be too late. I will conquer, in spite of her—yes, in spite of you! This is your last day in Deepweald."

"We are going from—where?"

"Not we—you. What use am I? I have done all I can, and failed. You must be saved by stronger hands—if you can. You will not hear—Clari—at Lindenheim. . . . Bring me my score."

WILLIAM CAXTON, PRINTER AND MERCER.

IN FOUR PARTS. PART IV. AT WESTMINSTER.

TOWARDS the end of the year 1476 or the beginning of 1477, we find industrious Caxton in "vertuous ocupacion and besynesse," not in Westminster Abbey, as has been frequently represented, but in the almonry opposite the gatehouses. Caxton himself is in some measure responsible for this confusion. In his imprints he uses indifferently, "Emprynted by me, William Caxton, at Westmynstre in thab-bay," or simply, "At Westmystre;" but Wynkyn de Worde sets the question at rest by his numerous imprints, "Emprynted at Westmyster in Caxton's hous," "Apud Westmonasterium, in domo Caxton," "Prynted in Caxon's hous at Westmynstre;" wherein it may be observed that the ingenious Wynkyn spells his old master's name in three different ways. As a matter of fact the almonry was considered, in Caxton's time, as part of the abbey precinct. This same almonry contained the almshouses built by the Lady Margaret, mother of King Henry the Seventh, and occupied a piece of ground between Tothill-street and Victoria-street, at the base of the triangle, one side of which is now covered by the Westminster Palace Hotel. Here he established himself in the house called the Red-pale or "reed-pale—red being "reed" in Caxtonian orthography. The reigning abbot at the time of Caxton's arrival was John Esteney, who was elected in 1474, and remained Abbot of Westminster till 1498. There is no evidence to show that Caxton received any kind of patronage or countenance from the abbot. He is only once mentioned as having, either personally or by deputy,

requested the accomplished translator to reduce some old English "evidences" into the language of his day. The great ecclesiastics were no patrons of Caxton, and it is by no means improbable that if he had attempted to print a translation of the Bible he would, like his German brethren, have brought a spiritual censorship upon himself.

Over-zealous antiquaries have striven to fix upon the exact house in which the first English printer dwelt. For many years an old building was pointed out as Caxton's house, but other zealous antiquaries—to wit, Mr. Nichols and Mr. Knight—proved that it could not be older than the time of Charles the Second. Nevertheless, faith was not dead in 1846, when the house, as if weary and disgusted with sham notoriety, fell down. Portions of the beams were made into walking-sticks and snuff-boxes, and presented to various patrons of literature as genuine relics of the famous printer. It was from the Redpale that Caxton issued his celebrated book advertisement—the first "broadside"—although only five and three-quarter inches by three—printed in this country. Foreign printers were in the habit of advertising in this way, so that Caxton merely "adapted" their plan to his own wants. The advertisement runs as follows:

If it plesse any man spiritual or temporel to bye any pyes of two and thre comemoracios of salisbury use emprynted after the forme of this preset lettre whiche ben wel and truly correct / late hym come to westmonester in to the almone/rye at the reed pale and he shal haue them good chepe ::

Supplico stet cedula.

The "pye" was a collection of rules to show the priest how to deal—under every possible variation in Easter—with the concurrence of more than one office on the same day. The pye of two commemorations was confined to the rules for Easter and Whitsuntide, and the pye of three commemorations included the rules for Trinity.

From the house in the almonry Caxton certainly issued all his important works, saving the Recuyell, the first edition of the Playe and Game of the Chesse, both printed abroad, and the History of Jason—which may have been printed either at Bruges or Westminster. For some time after setting up his press he was busied with the work of his patron, Earl Rivers, the Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers. This, as the first English book undoubtedly printed in England, is highly prized by collectors.

It is, like most of the works of Caxton,

not drawn from the antique fount direct, but is a translation of a French work—a fact which confirms the writer in his low estimate of the English culture of that day. The toil of translation and compilation from the dead languages was performed by Frenchmen, and their books, which possessed some little merit as actual work, were simply translated whole by the English. Caxton, by his residence in Bruges, had become familiar with the strange works founded by French writers on classical story, and confined himself to translating these, and adding prologues from his own pen. No one can read these original utterances without regretting that their author produced nothing of his own but them, and the final chapter, which he deemed it advisable to add to Higden's *Polyconyon*. When in the vein he could speak to the purpose, and in vigorous English too.

The *Dictes* was first produced in Latin—as a beautifully-illuminated MS. in the British Museum testifies. It was then translated into French by that noble person “Messire guilleme de Tignour, the chevalier,” who included the chapter of *Socrates on Women*. Then came one Master Stevyn Scrope, who translated, not from the Latin compilation, but from the French of “wyllyam tyngnovyle Knyght late provest of ye Cite of parys.” This translation is again interesting, as it was performed a quarter of a century before that of Lord Rivers, and for no less a person than the famous Sir John Fastolf, a brilliant soldier, distinguished in the French and Irish wars, a practised statesman, and a Knight of the Garter, the builder of Caistor Castle, and the real or pretended testamentary benefactor of the Paston family, who, for some time at least, took little by the legacy. Now Fastolf was a man of immense wealth, and, as a collector of books, enjoyed an almost European reputation. He must therefore be taken as a highly favourable specimen of his class. Yet the vellum MS. in the Harleian collection sets forth that the book done out of Latin into French for King Charles the Sixth is “now late translatyd out of the frensh tung into englysh to John Fostalf Knyght for his contemplacon and solas by stevyn scrope squyer sonne in law to the seide Fostalle. Deo gracias.” From this it is easy to gather two facts—one, that King Charles knew little Latin; the other, that so great a man as Fastolf—who must have possessed a colloquial knowledge of French

—could not read that language to his comfort and “solace.” Lord Rivers—whose manuscript is extant—the “copy” of or from Caxton's first printed edition—obviously worked from “Stevyn Scrope” as well as “Tyngnovyle.” It appears that Lord Rivers met with the French version on a pilgrimage to Compostella. While aboard ship, Lewis de Bretaylles, a Gascon knight attached to the Court of Edward the Fourth, showed the earl a copy in French of *Les dits Moraux des Philosophes*, which highly delighted him. On his return to England in the same year, the king appointed him one of the governors of the Prince of Wales, whereupon he commenced a translation of the work into English, which, notwithstanding the assistance of Scrope's version, occupied him till 1477. Rivers had evidently some confidence in Caxton's literary ability, as he requested him to “oversee” or edit his version; the result of which process was the addition of the chapter “towching wymmen,” and an original epilogue—one of Caxton's best. This is the volume reproduced in facsimile by Mr. Elliot Stock, from the fine copy in the British Museum.

Patronised at first by victorious Edward, by malmsey-butt Clarence, by the wife of Charles the Rash, and by Margaret of Somerset, Caxton numbered among his protectors the most accomplished prince of the house of York. “The Book of thordre of Chyvalry” is a noteworthy translation of a French work into the rough and vulgar “Englysshe,” and is appropriately dedicated to “my redoubted natural and dradde soverayne lord Kyng Richard Kyng of England and of Fraunce to thende that he commaunde this book to be had and redde unto other yong lordes knyghtes and gentylmen within this royaume that the noble ordre of chyvalrye be hereafter better used and honoured than hit hath ben in late dayes passid. And herein he shalle do a noble and vertuose dede and I shalle pray almyghty God for his long lyf and prosperus welfare and that he may have victory of al his enemyes and after this short and transitory lyf to have everlasting lyf in heven whereas in Joye and blysse without ende Amen.” In this dedication Caxton correctly alludes to Richard as one among other “young” lords and knights, for he was killed in his thirty-fourth year—the printer's prayer being unheard. Bosworth Field, however,

made little difference to Caxton, then growing old. As Edward the Fourth paid him a sum of money for certain services performed, and he printed Tully and Godefroy under that monarch's protection, so was he personally desired by King Henry the Seventh to translate and print *Faits of Arms*, and Eneydos was specially presented to Arthur, Prince of Wales. Many other works were produced by Caxton during his fourteen or fifteen years of life at Westminster—notably the *Mirror of the World*; *Reynard the Fox*; Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*; Gower's *Confessio Amantis*; the *Book of Courtesy*; the *Golden Legend*; the *Histories of King Arthur*, from the text of Sir Thomas Malory; the *Catons*, compilations of moral precepts; the *Book of Fame*; the *Fables of Æsop*; *Blanchardin and Eglantine*; the *Four Sons of Aymon*; the *Christening of God's Children*; the *Art and Craft to know well to die*; and a crowd of minor pamphlets and translations, some with numerous woodcuts of very rough execution, contrasting strangely with the elegance of the typography.

From records written by Caxton's own hand, it is not difficult to picture forth to ourselves the aspect of the Red-pale some three hundred and eighty-seven years ago. The master printer, now grown old, is "sittyng in his studye" among "dyverse paunflettis and bookys."

He is sorely exercised this fine summer morning, and his spirit is oppressed by the difficulty of his task. He has taken in hand a little book in French, lately translated out of Latin by some noble clerk of France, "which booke is named Eneydos made in latyn by that noble poete and grete clerke Vyrgyle." Caxton reads this—apparently to him—new version of the "*Tale of Troy divine*" with infinite pleasure, on account of the fair and honest terms in French, the like whereof he has never seen before, nor none so pleasant and well ordered. It seems to him that here is a work, requisite for noblemen to see, as well for the eloquence as the histories. He reflects that hundreds of years ago that same *Eneid* was learned daily in Italy, and that it was made by "Vyrgyle" in metre. This book, he concludes, must be translated into English, and taking pen and ink begins work at once; but on looking over the first leaf or two to correct them, he suddenly stops, and throws down his pen in doubt and fear. The fair and strange

terms in Eneydos will, he opines, bring the critics upon him; for, strange as it may seem, Caxton has critics who trouble him sorely. Among his patrons are sturdy sticklers for plain, homely English, not latinised or gallicised, and he doubts that his work should please these gentlemen who of late blamed him, saying that in his translations he had over-curious terms which could not be understood by the common people, and desired him to use old and homely terms in his translations. Fain would Master Caxton satisfy every man, and to that end took an old book and read therein, finding certainly the English so rude and broad that he could not well understand it. Moreover, the Lord Abbot of Westminster has lately shown him certain evidences, written in old English, to reduce it to the English now used. And this old English being written in such wise that it was more like Dutch than English, he can neither reduce it nor bring it to be understood.

Master Caxton cannot make up his mind, and no wonder, for his situation is peculiar. Language, like all living things, changes, and the tongue spoken in the days of Gower and Chaucer has undergone mutation in the course of nearly a hundred illiterate years. The language now used varies far from that used and spoken when he was born. What, then, should a man write in these days? enquires the scribe—for certainly it is hard to please every man by cause of diversity and change of language. For in these days every man that is in any reputation in his country will utter his communication in such manners and terms that few shall understand him.

The difficulty is increased by the multitude of critics; for some honest and great clerks have recently been with Master Caxton and desired him to write the most curious terms he could find. Thus between plain, rude, and curious language he stands abashed and dismayed. Pacing up and down his narrow study, he arrives at a decision. "In my judgment the common terms that be daily used are easier to be understood than the old and ancient English, and forasmuch as this book is not for a rude uplandish man to labour therein, nor read it, but only for a clerk and a noble gentleman that feels and understands deeds of arms, in love, and in noble chivalry;" wherefore, he concludes to translate the Eneydos into a language midway between both, not over-rude nor curious, "but in

such terms as shall be understood, by God's grace, according to my copy. And if any man halt in the reading of it, and find such terms that he cannot understand, let him go read and learn Vyrgill, or the Epistles of Ovid, and he shall understand easily."

Doubtless, good Master Caxton; the difficulty is enough to try the temper of a scribe overmuch vexed with the counsel of "grete clerkes" and worshipful patrons. It troubles thee far more than the worthy man who is to succeed thee in the Reed-pale, enjoy thy plant, and inherit thy reputation. Careless scribes make a sad mixture of Caxton, variously described as Causton, Caxon, Caxston, and so forth; but this was a natural feature of a time when men spelt as they listed. It is not, however, quite so easy to understand why Wynkyn de Worde could not make up his mind how to write his own name—a matter concerning which, as Henry Fielding insinuated, the proprietor may not always be the best judge. Apparently, he tried and tried again to see how it would look best, as the following selection from the list supplied by Mr. Blades will testify:

Wynken de Worde.	Vynkyn de worde.
Wynden de Worde.	VVinquin de VVorde.
Wynkyn de Worde.	Wynandam de Worde.
Wynkyn Theworde.	winandum de worde.
Wynkyn the Worde.	Vunandum de vuorde.
Wynkyn de Word.	

The morning work in the study over, Master Caxton has time to see how his trusty servants, Wynkyn de Worde and Pynson, are speeding with the practical part of the business. For the protégé of Lord Rivers carries on all the operations connected with the book-making, save and except only the making of paper, at his house in the almonry. The paper—for vellum, popular at Mayence, is but little employed at the Westminster press—is rough on the surface with long hairs embedded in it, but of a good strong fibrous texture and a clear mellow natural whiteness. Rough as it is, this paper is a foreign product—beyond English ingenuity—Sir John Spelman not yet having brought the art and mystery of paper-making hither. Master Caxton's paper is drawn from various foreign mills, as the watermarks testify, and is sent to him by an old friend, who buys for him at the great mart of Bruges, whither the paper-makers of Burgundy send their produce. It arrives in a mixed condition; various qualities packed hastily together. There lies the favourite paper with the watermark of the bull's head, under which lies a ream,

marked with the arms of John the Fearless, son of Philip the Bold. Next lie small parcels marked with the letter P, the initial of Philip the Good, and the Y for Ysabel, the third wife, and the unicorn—the symbol of power, adopted by the said Philip, who chose two unicorns as the supporters to his coat-of-arms. As Caxton looks carefully over his goods he finds other makes of paper watermarked with the arms of France, the arms of Champagne—used by the Burgundian paper-makers, on account of the royal descent of their dukes and their rule over Champagne—the hand and the single fleur-de-lys—the peculiar badge of the House of Burgundy—the Pope in his chair holding the keys, and the keys of St. Peter themselves.

All these papers are uneven in thickness and quality, and will require much sorting and arrangement before they can be used—but much as they vary in weight they are all costly. From the paper-closet the master printer next gives an eye to the type-founding department—verily an art and mystery, and most jealously guarded. His punches for stamping the matrices, in which the soft metal types are cast, are imported from abroad—the cutting of them requiring no little artistic skill, as the reputation of the printer depends upon the beauty of his type—a fact well understood in Germany and Italy, where the best artists are employed regardless of cost. Since Caxton's establishment at Westminster, he has employed several types varying slightly from the free and writing-like character of the great primer employed in the Recuyell of the Histories of Troye. There is, for instance, the direct imitation of Colard Mansion's "gros-bâtard," used for the first edition of the Canterbury Tales; and the magnificent angular type used in the Psalterium and for headings, the small letters of which are an exact copy of those cast by the early German founders, Fust and Schaeffer, and equally well executed, the capitals being a modification of the French "secretary," as presented in Colard Mansion's "gros-bâtard." There is also the neat little type used in the Pilgrimage of the Soul and the Polycronycon, the quaint angular type with its Lombard capitals of the Speculum Vitæ Christi, and the more elegant type to be presently employed in the Eneydos, when Master Caxton has gotten the English thereof to the complexion required by his critics and himself. He will also this bright morning look in on the ink-

maker in his grimy den, concocting a very sloppy mixture, and at the compositors, but recently armed with the setting-rule; at the pressmen with their clumsy apparatus; at the wood-engravers, hacking roughly away; at the bookbinders, looking aghast at the heap of work thrown upon them by the new-fangled way of doing things.

The morning's work over, Master Caxton walks quietly out of the Red-pale and the almonry, and hies him to the Wool-staple hard by the palace gates, where he finds certain of his old friends—valiant mercers, who have also lived beyond sea, fellow-members of the Fraternity or Guild of our Blessed Lady of the Assumption, and deeply interested in the stapling and storing of wool. As the sun rises high over old St. Paul's and the abbey of St. Peter, the gossips of the Wool-staple cease discussing the awkward posture of affairs in the North and the difficulties in Brittany, and wend their way towards that famous hostelry the Grayhound, to refresh their wearied souls withal. Here they are entertained with right good English fare—"turbuts, brought by special boat for these worshipful mercers, capons, chekyns, gese, conyes, and pigeons, oysters and sea-prawns, with plenty of good ale and wine," the latter costing as much as six pounds per tun. They make very merry, these jovial mercers, and wax so noisy, that before that point of hilarity at which they smash the crockery—after their pleasant custom—quiet Master Caxton slips off to the Red-pale, and after a nap settles once more to work at his "paunflettis and bookys."

Once more we must follow Master Caxton—not to the abbey, but the humbler parish church of St. Margaret close by. In the year 1491 he had undertaken the translation of the "most virtuous history of the devout and right renowned lives of holy fathers living in the desert;" but his own life lasted not till the completion of his pious work. He was buried in the churchyard—where it is not known—the only certain record of his death being in the account-books of the churchwardens of St. Margaret, which give evidence of a funeral more costly than usual:

Itm atte Bureyng of William Caxton for
iiij torches vjs. viijd.
Itm for the belle atte same bureyng vjd.

No stone marked his burial-place until the Roxburgh Club erected the simple tablet in the church of St. Margaret.

Since that date, various attempts have been made to found a Caxton Memorial. It has been suggested that a poetical monument, consisting of a fountain and light, to symbolise his art, should be erected in Westminster Abbey, and that a more material iron statue should be dedicated to him. For some unexplained reason, these attempts failed to rouse the sympathy of a public, keenly appreciative otherwise of Caxton's services to his country and mankind. There is one objection to a statue of Caxton which appears difficult to get over. There is no extant portrait of England's first printer. That accepted as his by Lord Orford is based on the small defaced vignette in the manuscript of the *Dictes and Sayings* at Lambeth Palace. King Edward the Fourth is represented on his throne, with the young Prince of Wales—to whom Lord Rivers was tutor—standing by his side; there are two kneeling figures, one of which, Lord Rivers, is presenting to the king a copy of his own translation. The other, assumed by Lord Orford to be Caxton, is the portrait of an ecclesiastic, with evident tonsure, and probably represents Haywarde the scribe, who certainly engrossed the copy, and perhaps executed both the illumination and its accompanying rhythmical dedication. The portrait commonly assigned to Caxton, which first appeared in his life by the Rev. Mr. Lewis, of Margate, is like a large percentage of historical portraits—a picture of somebody else, if of anybody in particular. A portrait of Burchiello, an Italian poet, from a small octavo edition of his work on Tuscan poetry, of the date of 1554—wherein it is introduced merely as an illustration of a Florentine with the "capuchin" and "becca," the turban cap with a streamer—was copied by Faithorn for Sir Hans Sloane as the portrait of Caxton; one more proof that a demand will generally create a supply. Lewis improved upon his predecessor by adding a thick beard to Burchiello's chin, and otherwise altering his character, and in this form the Italian poet made his appearance upon copper as Caxton. A statue, then, is happily out of the question, and all may enjoy the Caxton Exhibition without dread of that awful possibility. It is to be hoped, however, that English people who have so much money that they are obliged to give it away to Mesopotamians and equally remote foreigners, will not heedlessly pass by this present opportunity of doing good,

and of commemorating a citizen for whom the gates of our National Pantheon, if we had such a thing, would assuredly open widely.

A BRILLIANT BEING.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

THE shadow that fell so softly at first between Mrs. Carruthers and Pendleton begins to deepen now perceptibly. Poor fellow! I am very sorry for him. Still there is something contemptible to my mind in the futile way in which he struggles to retain her flagging attention and regard. I know her real sentiments, which, with womanly consideration, she conceals from him.

"He's a bumptious little booby," she tells me confidentially; "I have shown him a longer string of kindnesses than I can enumerate in a hurry, but because, forsooth, he has chosen to fall in love with me he considers me 'ungrateful' for not putting up with his tediousness whenever he chooses to bestow it upon me, and Pendleton is tedious, even his best friends must admit that; all selfish people are more or less tedious indeed, for they will talk about themselves; to me there is nothing more insufferable than Charlie's habit of chattering on and on about himself and his own hopes and disappointments; I never get a chance of saying a word about myself, and naturally my own interests are more engrossing to me than Charlie Pendleton's."

"Yes, selfishness is very trying," I say quietly; "supposing you give Pendleton a lesson on the absurdity of it by asking him to spend the evening with you, and showing him that you have about you those who, with powers far superior to his, are contented to abrogate all claims to consideration or a hearing in your presence?"

"I really think you appreciate and understand me," she answers meditatively; "at one time I believed that Charlie did too, but to my bitter regret the scales have fallen from my eyes about him, and I see now that if his own poor little insignificant talents find no field for display he gets impatient and restless, and utterly unable to discern the talents of others; however, if you like to bear the burden of him, I will ask him here, and try to give my attention to what he says about himself."

She gives me a warm smile and a warm

white hand as she says this, and for an instant I feel treacherously disposed to join her in the hue and cry she is raising against Pendleton's human frailty in feeling a slight interest in himself. But I check this disposition, and say instead:

"Pendleton is a very good fellow, always ready to give a friend a hand up either in pleasure or business; I can't forget that he introduced me to you."

"And I can't forget that he repented his act of unwonted generosity as soon as he found that the introduced was estimated more highly than the introducer; jealousy is such a common failing. Do you know that little friend of mine, Mrs. Acton? she's painfully jealous of me, but still, as she helps to make an evening go, I'll ask her with Charlie and a few others; and after that evening I must go to my work again, leaving you to put what impression of me Charlie and Mrs. Acton and other friends may like to give."

"Mrs. Acton always speaks of you in terms of the highest admiration and warmest regard," I say stupidly, for I ought to know, by this time, that Mrs. Acton is merely a peg on which Mrs. Carruthers contrives to hang any views or sentiments respecting herself, which she may desire to have held.

"When you have quite done your work here, I suppose you will go away, Constance?" Mrs. Acton breaks out rather unexpectedly early in the evening "At home," to which we have all been invited for divers charitable purposes by Mrs. Carruthers.

"When I have quite done my work! Ah! when will that be?" Mrs. Carruthers replies, with a pronounced sigh.

"Not while there is a fool left in the world, and he chances to come your way," Mrs. Acton answers.

"And while this world lasts fools will exist in it, my dear Alice," Mrs. Carruthers says, with admirable command of temper.

"I never saw the axiom, 'One fool makes many,' so perfectly illustrated before," Mrs. Acton continues pityingly, looking at me. And I begin to think that my enchantress's little friend has fallen a prey to the green-eyed monster. Mrs. Carruthers endorses this opinion presently by saying:

"Isn't it strange that women can't quietly accept the fact of being excelled? Alice Acton is clever and shrewd enough in a limited way, and is wonderfully diplomatic

as a rule; but even she can't help showing that she feels a little jealous now and then about me! I can't help being more versatile and so more attractive than other women, can I? If I knew anybody as superior to myself as I am to the generality of my own sweet sex, I should accept her superiority and never make an attempt to fight for supremacy with her; but vanity, little low vanity, blinds most women, and they either don't know when they are beaten, or they take you men for such fools that you don't know a hawk from a heron. Now if Mrs. Acton cast me into the shade at every turn, I should take a very different line to hers."

"Mrs. Acton has plenty of tact," I venture to remark.

"Yes, but it's useless her opposing tact to genuine talent," Mrs. Carruthers says. "I have no patience with people who overrate a quality that human beings possess in common with cats. Mrs. Acton can keep her temper under, and can please people who are taken in by her; but directly she comes in contact with anyone more brilliant than herself, she takes refuge in the weak woman's silence! I love Alice Acton dearly, but I can't help seeing that she is rather shallow, and more than rather vain. There are times when I don't hesitate to tell her that I think she is making a fool of herself."

"It always strikes me that Mrs. Acton has just caught the shadow of your vivacity, but fails to give it any substance in consequence of having less dramatic power, and a weaker physique," I say, surrendering Mrs. Acton and her claims to the smallest particle of courteous consideration, on the spot. The truth is, I have put Mrs. Carruthers on such a lofty pedestal; I have roared out her praises so loudly; I have called so pertinaciously on all whom I knew, to come and admire the piece of perfection I believed her to be at the onset, that I am wilfully blind to any sign my idol gives of tottering, out of consideration for my own opinion. If she is not the bright particular star I have insisted upon proclaiming her to be, then have I blundered too egregiously! I rashly determine to give her a fair opportunity of putting out the lights of a great number of the lady friends of my family. Some of these "know her a little" already, and most of them dislike her more than a little already! For she has, as it were, swooped me off in her eagle

flight, from the midst of their 'safe fold, and they speak of me as "poor young Power" to one another, and avow that I really dare not say that my soul is my own in the presence of Mrs. Carruthers, who, they meanly insinuate, only refrains from entertaining honourable matrimonial intentions towards me, because she is trying to mature some more profitable ones in relation to another in others! They shall "see her as she is," I resolve rashly. So I call them together under the pretence of feasting them under my newly-decorated bachelor roof—in reality that they may see with what superb ease and propriety Constance Terriss fills the throne I am at this juncture always ready to erect for her at any moment, on any spot.

By some special gift of divination, some astute power of reading whatever she desires to read, she discovers that they are all opposed to and intriguing against her! Still she is very magnanimous, for though she refuses to believe me when I tell her that not one of them has hazarded a word against her, she makes a free and ample display of her great and varied talents for their amusement; while I amble about the room, and try to be meek under the exalted feeling I have, that I am the means of their benefiting by the condensed essence of the several talents of George Sand, Adelaide Kemble, Grisi, and Ristori. I try to remember that she is but human, and though of "great parts," that these "parts" may crumble away at the first contact with cold or catarrh. Alas! it never occurs to me that she may crumble away from me, leaving me to perish under the ruins of that temple of appreciation and flattery in which I have enshrined her, and into which I insist upon calling all I know to come and worship.

"All your friends detest me," she whispers to me several times during the evening; "but it's jealousy, my dear Cecil, nothing but jealousy: and I am sure I do nothing to create it. I simply am what nature made me; and I ask you, do I do anything to detract from them, or to distract attention from them? The great majority of them are fools, my dear boy; but they're not such fools as not to see that a woman to whom the powers above have vouchsafed brains, takes the pas of them, in spite of all their showy, well-gilt, weakly inoffensiveness. I can't congratulate you on your galaxy of beauty. Our estimable Alice Acton can hold her own with the best of them. It was

prudent of you to bear her charms in mind when you were issuing your invitations, and to take care that they should not be outshone. See how they hate me, because you stay by me! Go and do your duty, Cecil; go and cajole those wearisome women with a few compliments, suited to their shallow understandings. Yes! they are shallow, Cecil; you know they are, only you're not frank as I am, and so you dare not say it."

"Some of them are dear good women," I say, humbly; and I mention two or three who have been very kind to me, and for no ulterior object, I can swear.

"Dear good women," my charming friend echoes laughingly; "so was your grandmother's washerwoman a dear good woman, I've no doubt; is that any reason why they should let their ill-nature get the better of them, to the extent of showing me, as they do, that they abhor me, because every man in the room wants to talk to me? I don't care for the attention of the million, do I, Elinor?"

"No, mamma, not at all," the obedient girl answers promptly, with an obedient but peculiar smile.

"But I am not going to be sycophant enough to evade it, for the sake of pleasing a number of spiteful old women who want to damage me, because I am not as disagreeable as they are themselves."

"I am sure they don't want to damage you, and I'm equally sure that you're the only person who thinks them disagreeable," I say; striking a feeble blow for these poor traduced friends of mine, who are really innocent of all offence against my tempestuous enslaver. But in spite of all my well-meant endeavours, I fail in organising a harmonious meeting. For though Constance Terriss is liberal in giving herself to the good cause of amusing my guests by the display of her matchless abilities, she is not by any means satisfied with the meed of applause they give her, and so condemns them wholesale, in not too subdued tones, for being bound in the meshes of hopeless mediocrity. Half at least of my friends go away offended with her, and she in turn is offended with all my men friends, for not having joined her in deriding everybody else.

The morning after this, Pendleton takes occasion to tell me that he "hopes I am not going to make a fool of myself!" I do not answer him in words. Words addressed by me to Pendleton on this subject would be weak, for the laws of

civilisation would restrain me from expressing even a moderate amount of the ineffable scorn and disgust I feel for any fellow calling himself a friend, who can condescend to use the idle verbiage of the frivolous world about such a superb woman as Constance Terriss, and such a seriously sweet matter as her possible preference for anyone. Accordingly I do not deign to answer Charlie Pendleton, but in the afternoon I propose to Mrs. Carruthers.

It is very romantic! She does not quite accept me, nor does she by any means refuse me. She tells me that I am "a very foolish boy to want to marry a woman who cannot help being conscious of being far more highly gifted, intellectually, than myself or any other man," and she modestly adds, that my "folly has been shared by every other marriageable member of my sex, whose fate it has been to come across her path." At the same time she gives me to understand that I am richly endowed with many of the qualities she chiefly admires in a man, especially in a lover who proposes transforming himself into a husband. On enquiry I find that these qualities are: first, appreciation of Constance Terriss; second, sympathy with Constance Terriss; third, belief in the supremacy of Constance Terriss; and lastly, complete readiness to abrogate all claim to right of judgment or individuality of any kind, in the presence of Constance Terriss! My other virtues may be rare and many, but she has no care for them. So on the strength of those which she has taught me to develop in relation to herself, Mrs. Carruthers consents to let me contract a sort of engagement with her, which does not quite fetter her, and which leaves me without the ghost of a chance of freedom. "Love, as far as the woman is concerned," she tells me, "to be happy, must be free; directly he is bound, he becomes either odious or ridiculous." To my own surprise, I assent to her proposition; but I do it in a low-spirited manner. Then I go home to tell my triumph to Pendleton, who is not nearly so embittered by the tidings as I have been fearing he would be.

"Perhaps I may be your step-son-in-law, Cecil, old boy," he says with emotion. "Elinor is a jewel of a girl, and will make a jewel of a wife—"

"Have you had the presumption to aspire to Elinor?" I interrupt hotly, actuated, as I suppose, by a feeling of paternal pride and jealousy. Charlie Pendleton is a very nice, amiable young

fellow, but he will never set the Thames on fire. Whereas Elinor, it is revealed to me in a flash, as I think of her for the first time in connection with love, is not "one of" but "the" sweetest, cleverest, and kindest girl that ever dimmed all other stars in the firmament of a man's life. My devotion to Elinor is of course vicarious! Do I not fancy myself engaged to her mother? But at the same time it is such genuine devotion, that all my soul is in revolt at the idea of Charlie Pendleton speaking as if he had but to woo to win her. I interrupt him, therefore, with a degree of heat and asperity that he apparently fails to understand, for he replies:

"That's the way the cat jumps, is it? I thought the communication you made to me just now referred to the mother, not to the daughter?"

"I stand in the position of Mrs. Carruthers's affianced husband," I explain pompously; "therefore her child, to whose welfare she has ever devoted herself in a way that is unparalleled in the annals of maternal love, is as dear to me as herself."

"Really!" Pendleton says sarcastically; "on my word, Power, I don't know whether that sentiment does most honour to your head or your heart; shall we put it to Constance Terriss, and leave the decision to her?"

"Her decision will be mine," I say meekly, and Pendleton roars with laughter, and answers that he hopes Mrs. Carruthers will edit my actions for the future with her head, and not with her heart. "If she revises and improves you according to the dictates of the former, I really think you'll be all right, old man," he says earnestly, "for though she isn't all she fancies herself, and though she wouldn't tear the flesh from her own breast to feed her young, or do any business of that sort as she likes to make believe she would, still she's a clever woman, and a good mother. And if Elinor is in question she won't make a fool of herself."

"I shall stand in the place of a father to Elinor," I say solemnly, feigning to misunderstand him still, "and when Elinor's happiness is at stake my wife will come to me for advice."

"No doubt she will, and not take it when you give it," Pendleton says heartily; "dear old boy, I see it's going to be all right, and I shall not be astonished if your mother-in-law dances a breakdown at your wedding!"

His talk strikes me as being ribald in

the extreme. Nevertheless it is more in sorrow than in anger that I leave Pendleton, and retire to the seclusion of my own study, where I compose and pen a letter to my people at home, announcing to them that I propose to become the husband of Constance Terriss. That they will be afraid, with a great deal of amazement, when they come up to the wedding and see the bride, I have no manner of doubt. But in the meantime, until they do see her, I draw her lines and put in her colours in a way that will astound them a little, and cause them to feel unbounded admiration (I hope) for my magnificent choice.

I grow more and more nervous as I indite the letter, for in the natural order of things the daughter has to be mentioned as well as the mother. My work is easy as far as Constance goes, for I can say of her literary and artistic reputation generally all that I can remember that the reviews have said during the last ten years. And when I come to the description of her private worth, and her social charms—well! words fail me. That portion of my letter therefore is soon scamped in, but when it becomes necessary to say something about Elinor, difficulties arise, and I feel that I shall blunder in designating her. Common sense tells me that it is senile to speak of this graciously-grown, pretty young woman as Mrs. Carruthers's "little girl," and I shrink with an unaccountable shrinking from speaking of her as my "future daughter." If I carelessly record the fact of her existence and say no more about her, they will all set off speculating about her at home in the wildest manner. My mother's name is to me a synonym for all that is good and kind, generous, truthful, and tolerant. Still she will give a second thought to the fact that I am, at five-and-twenty, going to take the responsibility of a daughter only four-and-a-half years younger than myself upon me! I groan as I erase my first paragraph about Elinor, and commence a second with the words, "My Constance has a child." I break down at this point, and the words I have indited stare back upon me from the paper, and seem to reproach me for having put the fact so crudely and imperfectly. The mention is unworthy of Elinor, and of myself. It never occurs to me at the time that a slight garbling of facts is unworthy of the allegiance I owe to Constance. However, I erase my second para-

graph about Elinor, and make a dash at it thus:

"There is a daughter by the first marriage. Wait till you see Elinor Carruthers before you express any disapprobation of young men burdening themselves with ready-made families." Then I go on to speak of my own happiness, and to my surprise there is very little to say about it! As I conclude my letter to my mother I trust that she will take my bliss for granted, for verily there is little of it expressed in the passages I have penned.

I am the eldest son, and my brothers and sisters have caught the old-fashioned custom in our family, of looking up to the eldest son as the hope and stay, the pride and prop of the house. As a race, we Powers are rather conservative, and have a wholesome horror of new grooves. We have always deemed the great Earl Warwick's crucial test for the fitness of women for domestic life, "that they should know how to spin and be virtuous," the right one. I tremble, therefore, for my parents' peace of mind if, on the occasion of their next visit to the market-town, they see the name of Constance Terriss advertised in letters a foot high, as the leading attraction in the current number of "Living Notorieties," which is just now being published with unlimited success. If a peeress has preceded her, and a prelate is advertised to follow, they may bear the blow with fortitude. But if a dashing danseuse carried off the honours last, and a distinguished divorcee will smile upon the world from next week's cartoon, then indeed will they bewail themselves that I have not been lured to the altar by one of the daughters of our own land, who have never done anything famous or infamous enough to win a place for themselves among "Living Notorieties." How fervently I wish, as this dread thought crosses my mind, that the editor of the above-named admirable work of art and fancy were not above suspicion. If gold could procure a place in those pages for the ugliest good woman in England with a handle to her name, she should have it—and so should the stupidest and safest of bishops! But, alas! I know a deaf ear would be turned to my application, and therefore I make no effort to suborn anyone, but just trust supinely to Fate to arrange it, so that when Elinor's mother does appear, she shall appear in good company.

The more I think of Elinor, the more I find myself sharing the sentiments of the

man in Robert Brough's poem, "Neighbour Nellie."

Still, as jealous as a mother,
A suspicious, cankered churl,
I look vainly for the setting,
To be worthy such a pearl.

I writhe as I remember Charlie Pendleton's presumptuous intentions, and feel that (if I were not engaged to her mother) I should have a better right than he has to aspire to the hand of the girl whom I am rapidly coming to love with a warmth that is not at all parental.

My father and mother are warm-hearted, impulsive people, with very little to do. It occurs to them, therefore, that it would be a good thing to come up and answer my announcement of the matrimony that is impending in person. They arrive at my chambers one afternoon, just as I am preparing to start for five o'clock tea with my grand proprietress, and with many misgivings I entreat them to accompany me, hoping fondly that they will refuse. They accede at once with a readiness that is revolting to me, and a hopeful expectation of finding my "future wife all and more than I have described her," that makes me tremble. That they will find her a good deal "more," I have no manner of doubt. Walking over hot ploughshares would be agreeable pedestrian exercise, compared to this ordeal through which I have to pass. If I can only manage to murmur a request to Constance, unheard by the others, that she, will tone herself down," all may yet be well! Buoyed up by this hope, I adventure forth with my parents, with as gay and gallant a front as I can get up for the occasion, and presently we arrive in Mrs. Carruthers's drawing-room, and my trial by fire commences.

It really is a very pretty scene, and as it is the last in which I tread the boards as Mrs. Carruthers's slave I may be forgiven for reproducing it. There are three or four of her perfidious female friends present, and Mrs. Carruthers herself, in a peacock blue Watteau gown, is "dispensing the graceful hospitalities" of the ebonied tea-table and oriental china. What admirable tea she makes! how strong it is; and how hot! How firm and white her hands look as they play about among the rich deep green dragons and corals of that wonderful old Japanese service!

How proud I am of her, how diffident I feel of my own merits when weighed in the balance against those of such a mag-

nificent woman! At the same time how terrified I am as to the effect her free enunciations may have upon my mother. In all the midst of my bewilderment I have time to remark that Elinor is exquisite in an ivory-white serge that wraps itself about her in most artistic folds. I feel a throb of pride in my future step-daughter as I watch her graceful, composed bearing on this trying afternoon, and I endeavour to make myself believe that the throb is only caused by pride, and that no other feeling quickens the pulsation of my heart. These conflicting emotions "have it out" with one another in my mind in a moment or two! At the end of those moments they make peace very hurriedly for a most overwhelming one, for my mother, after greeting both Constance and her "little girl" kindly and gravely, turns with a fine flush on her sweet, good face to Elinor, and says:

"So you're going to be my son's wife, my dear? I don't think I could have chosen better for him myself."

"I don't think you could," Mrs. Carruthers exclaims, with an amount of tact that makes me like her better than I have ever liked her before, for I feel that it is born of true maternal feeling. For Elinor is in an agony of embarrassment at the mistake, and would fall into the error of an attempted explanation of how matters really stand, if it were not for her mother's intervention.

It is a very bewildering hour. But Elinor and I are so clearly revealed to each other by the flash of that divine intelligence which irradiated my mother's remark, that we each feel there can be no going back. If this conviction did not make me so supremely happy, I might experience a pang of wounded vanity at the spectacle of the genuine, debonair ease and indifference, with which Mrs. Carruthers is evidently prepared to resign me. As it is, I admire her for it, and feel assured that she will make the most agreeable of mothers-in-law.

For of course it speedily settles itself thus! Elinor and I are going to marry, and that little preliminary mistake I have made will never be referred to by us, save as a sort of providential mistake which was made for the furtherance of the great scheme of our lives. I shall warmly bless Mrs. Carruthers for being my mother-in-law, in which capacity doubtless she will be amusing, helpful, and valuable enough, and I doubly bless her for not being my wife!

THE WORLDS IN THE SKY.

GEORGE SAND wrote in confidence to a friend that if, after death, her soul were to transmigrate into another planet, she would like it to be one where they could neither read nor write. For my own part, were I not a terrestrial creature, I think I should like to have been born in the planet Mars. Such at least is the conclusion to which I have been led by the perusal of M. Camille Flammarion's last work, *Les Terres du Ciel*,* which gives, in eloquent and exhaustive terms, the latest intelligence about all the known planets, great and small, besides speculations regarding others unknown.

Many people fancy that Venus must be a delightful residence, because she looks so clear and bright. But all is not gold, nor even silver, that glitters, and Venus can hardly be a worldly paradise. Splendour may be all very well, but comforts merit a passing thought. There is no fault to be found with Venus's days and nights in central latitudes; they are much the same as ours, only just a trifle shorter. But her years put everybody in the position of the famous beggar, whose days had dwindled to the shortest span. Instead of Earth's allowance of three hundred and sixty-five, sometimes sixty-six days, Venus only gives you two hundred and thirty-one, not eight months in lieu of twelve. If the term of life there, as here, be threescore years and ten, four months out of twelve is a terrible discount to deduct for the pleasure of dwelling on the brilliant evening star which is our next-door neighbour.

And then, how quickly quarter-day comes round! That inconvenience, however, or perhaps convenience, takes its quality from circumstances; I mean ours, yours or mine, according as they are straightened or easy. If we are overhoused and over-established, with two horses when we can only afford one, and a butler out of livery when an adolescent buttons would be more prudent, Venus's quarter-day must give fearfully frequent pinches; but if we are overbalanced at our banker's with more planetary three per cents. and midland-Venus railway dividends coming in than we spend, in that case quarter-day may dawn upon us as often as it pleases.

Neither have you, in Venus, the choice of giving servants a month's warning or a

* Paris: Didier et Cie., 1877, pp. 600.

month's wages; neither do monthly magazines, by delighting their readers, afford literary ladies and gentlemen opportunities of earning welcome guineas; neither are there tide-tables nor tidal trains for the navigation of Channels, they being all tideless; no lovers there can take moonlight walks; all the consequence of Venus's having no moon.

The climate? Well; Russia exaggerated; not an Eden bathed in eternal spring. The seasons, instead of being lukewarm and undecided, manifest unmistakably what they are and mean. The Sun stares at you fiercely, opening his eye one full third wider than with us. That would be a comparative trifle if Venus waltzed round her orbit in as upright a position as we do. But in consequence of the great inclination of her axis, her polar overlap her tropical regions, producing two zones, much wider than our temperate zones, whose inhabitants are exposed to alternations of excessive heat and cold. In fact, there are no temperate zones. The snow and ice at the poles have no time to accumulate; a thaw sets in and spring passes like a dream. The agitation of the winds, the rains and tempests, surpass in continuance and violence anything we witness here. There is constant evaporation from the seas, with the immediate precipitation of torrential showers, and the clouds vexatiously resulting thence are the great impediment to our study of Venus's topography.

Picturesque this and even sublime, no doubt, but inconvenient for creatures constituted as we are. M. Flammarion, however, suggests a means, which you shall shortly learn, how climatal difficulties may probably be got over. And here let me remark that our own Earth teaches us to be cautious, in saying that living beings cannot exist under circumstances for which we know no precedent. We, men and women, are air-breathing animals; we know that, if we walk into water and fill our lungs with it instead of air, we die; that life under water, without air, for us is impossible. If our telescopes showed us a world entirely covered with water, we should naturally and reasonably believe that it was absolutely uninhabited and uninhabitable, had not the planet we dwell on taught us the possibility, by their wondrous adaptation to the medium they live in, of fishes, seals, porpoises, and whales leading long and pleasant lives. If we had not the example of fish before our eyes, no philosopher could contrive, or

admit the existence of, creatures breathing aerated water only. The same of flying things. Even although we might have invented balloons, if we had no bats, birds, or winged insects to convince us of the fact, we should treat as fabulous and absurd the idea that a creature heavier than air could raise itself in air by mere muscular power, and convert the gaseous and invisible atmosphere into a support for rapid and long-sustained locomotion. These two simple instances are sufficient to prove that human experiences are quite incapable of setting limits to creative adaptations, under conditions which might seem to render life impossible.

Venus's mountains are much higher than ours—namely, more than twice as high as the Himalayas, her northern hemisphere being more mountainous than the southern. Her Alpine Clubs therefore have fine opportunities for glorious and foolhardy scaling of peaks, without much inconvenience, as it happens, from rarefied air; unless M. Flammarion's supposition removes all danger whatever. The case is this: Venus's atmosphere—whose ordinary state is to be covered with clouds, thereby tempering the rays of the broad-disked sun—although composed of the same gases as ours, is thicker and denser than our own, and more saturated with aqueous vapour, which must feel like breathing diluted water. The deep atmosphere gives lengthened twilights as some compensation for the want of a moon. But with an atmosphere expressly made for flight, why should not the Aphroditeans be organised for flying? Thus can they escape the contrasts of winter and summer by migrating, like our storks and swallows, from hemisphere to hemisphere. Venus's seas are Mediterraneans rather than oceans; the influence of their waters moderates either extreme of temperature; and it is thither that frozen-out or scorched-out populations flock by the help of fleet and powerful wings, instead of by the tardy railways which carry our shivering invalids to winter in the South. The same means enable bashful couples to keep rendezvous on the top of Aphroditean Matterhorns, and allow parties sociably inclined to arrange ice-eating picnics on Venus's Mount Rosas. Nevertheless, graceful and easy as flight looks, it must be hard work, and, when one is lazily inclined, a great exertion. All things considered, I will not transmigrate to Venus, unless on compulsion.

Of life on Jupiter we know less, and

that little is not inviting. As a slightly extenuating circumstance, in consequence of his upright axis he enjoys, in place of four seasons, perpetual spring; but that spring may be more than mild, with a temperature perhaps of boiling water in the shade. For it is not certain how far Jupiter has cooled down from the incandescent state, in which he parted from the Sun. Even if he has formed a solid outside crust, walking on its surface may still be warm work. Possibly it is covered with hot marshes and tall rank vegetation like that which supplied our store of coal, with jungles of gigantic club-mosses and ferns, the haunts of monster megalosauri and other long-jawed, big-eyed reptiles, amongst whom were a man to appear he would be immediately snapped up as a dainty tid-bit. Jovine geography remains unknown at present, and life is probably only at its dawn. The famous changeable bands which streak his disk are so many shifting zones of impenetrable fog, occasionally lighted up by auroræ boreales, which prevent our getting a good look at his actual surface. Consequently, his inhabitants do not often see either the Sun, their four moons, or the starry heavens. Besides the continuous bands, and above them, clouds proper are driven along the equatorial regions by trade-winds beyond comparison more violent than ours. By-and-by, most likely, when Jupiter's fiery youth has passed, those vapours will be condensed into rain and solidified into carbon, the sky will become clear, and our posterity, peeping through perfected instruments, will trace the distribution of land and water, if not the course of rivers and the sites of cities.

Jupiter's years are long enough, and to spare—nearly twelve of ours—making leasehold property almost as good as freehold. A damsel there of sweet seventeen is a doubly centenarian matron with us. His days, on the other hand, are in all latitudes ridiculously short. A day and a night together are over in less than ten hours. Existence is almost entirely occupied by the process of going to bed and getting up again. As to dressing, ladies attending queenly drawing-rooms have to begin over-night to be ready by next noon-time. That penance, however, has been performed by terrestrial belles, when head-dresses were high and hair-dressers scarce.

Jupiter is too big to suit our ideas of comfort—twelve hundred and thirty times bigger than we are. If Jupiter were an orange, we should only be a pea. On him,

we should feel lost, like the trusty man and wife without encumbrance, deputed to keep the rats out of a vast country mansion during the owner's absence abroad. The possession of one moon, like ours, is pleasant enough, but Jupiter's four moons must render all lunar reckonings a puzzle. Only think of four different sorts of months, and four different fluxes and refluxes of tides! When a prisoner there gets so many calendar months, is he at liberty to choose the shortest? Although Jupiter is only a quarter as dense as we are, in consequence of his enormous size everything on his surface is twice and a half as heavy as here. The baby you dandle so pleased and so proud would, on Jupiter, severely tax your arms to lift it. Lapdogs, poor dears, would be as good as suppressed. On the satellites, which are doubtless inhabited at the present date, things are made more pleasant. Still, upon the whole, I had rather not go to Jupiter or to either of his four attendant moons, in spite of their respectable dimensions.

Saturn has a complicated system, a universe in little, all his own; central globe, rings three or more, and satellites eight. Popularly, he is an unlucky planet, the patron of moping hypochondriacs, the symbol of predestined misfortune. "Saturnine" means crabbed, gloomy, morose. Heavy and poisonous lead is his representative metal; which is inconsistent with the fact, because he is absurdly light for a world pretending to be substantial. Were he to fall into an ocean like ours—our own is not big enough to hold him—he would float on it like a ball of cork, or, more correctly, of maple wood. His year is nearly thirty times as long as ours. His day and night, of only ten hours sixteen minutes in all, present the same inconvenience as Jupiter's. The seasons, each more than seven years long, resemble ours, but the general temperature is probably higher. Saturn still retains some of his primordial heat. We never behold his actual surface, no more than Jupiter's, except perhaps at the polar regions; for a dense atmosphere, laden with cloud and vapour and containing gases non-existent with us, envelopes this slightly-solid globe, on whose surface, in spite of its colossal size, weights are only one-tenth heavier than with us. Its inhabitants, according to M. Flammarion thirty times more long-lived than ourselves, are strictly aerial, with transparent bodies, highly sensitive, swimming in the atmosphere like fish, rolling about in its various

strata like the balloons imitating animals sent up as pilots before a serious ascent, and, as was once believed of birds of paradise, never alighting on the ground or perching on trees. Now and then they may sit on banks of clouds, as the gods of mythology did when assembled on the summit of Mount Olympus.

And this is a matter not of choice, but of necessity. If the atmosphere be as deep as it looks, it must exert at its base an enormous pressure, and be denser and heavier than the objects on the planet's surface. Under those strange circumstances, creatures organised on aerostatic principles can only reach the soil by plunging and diving; to which soil they must hold hard and fast if they wish to remain there. But the air being filled with all sorts of articles saves its inhabitants the trouble of searching after them below. Moreover, the attraction of the rings diminishes the weight of objects, and there is a zone between them and the central globe where bodies have no weight at all, but tend to fall as much one way as the other, and therefore hang suspended, unless the atmosphere allows the Saturnians to fly and fetch them, and perhaps take a morning walk afterwards on the rings, which no one supposes to be the permanent homes of living creatures. Would you like to make Saturn your future residence? I take the liberty of guessing that you would not.

It is useless to go farther afield in search of lodgings in the Solar System. We will return to our neighbour Mars, who perhaps may suit us. Mars, like Venus, has no moon, and therefore has neither lunatics nor lunatic asylums. Mars's day is nearly forty minutes longer than ours, a convenient margin for unpunctual people. Its exact duration within the tenth of a second is known to our astronomers, who, unreasonable men, are not yet satisfied, but recommend further observations next autumn, when the planet will be favourably situated "in opposition." His year is nearly twice as long as ours; to which few will object if the term of life be proportionally extended. Geographical zones of climate exist, as here; atmosphere, analogous to our own; seasons, much the same, only twice as long; inhabitants lighter, more active and more centenarian than ourselves.

I write with M. Flammarion's Planisphere or flattened Map of Mars before me. So complete and precise is it, that one is surprised to see on it "Regions still

unknown, because these latitudes in winter are covered with north-polar snows." It is a pleasure to know that there is rather more land than water in Mars, the whole nicely interlarded together, like the fat and lean in well-fed meat. You may travel round the world almost dry-foot, and therefore with a total exemption from the qualms excited by aqueous undulation. What a blessing that, even if there were nothing else to recommend the planet! The seas are not real oceans, but tideless Mediterraneans connected by pleasant Bosphoruses, unvexed, let us hope, by Eastern questions.

True, we have not yet caught sight of the natives. But when we see a railway train rushing along in the distance, although driver, stoker, passengers, and guard are all and everyone of them invisible, we are perfectly certain that there they are. And when we behold Mars, with his continents, gulfs, clouds, and polar snows—which are his first, second, third, and fourth class carriages—passing us at more than railway speed, may we not be sure that he too carries passengers, who are not so very different from us after all? Nevertheless, there are causes for variation from ourselves in the living organisms that exist on his surface.

Mars is considerably smaller than Terra—his diameter is about the half of hers—and lighter, also, in proportion to his size. A journey round him is no formidable undertaking; in fact, no more than a pleasant tour. Weight on his surface is less than on any other planet in our system. The muscular effort necessary, here, for leap-frog would carry a lad, there, over the tops of houses. Animals and vegetables are taller than with us, although the world itself is smaller. It is not the volume of a globe which regulates the dimensions of creatures living on its surface, but the intensity of weight or gravity relatively to the media (air or water) in which those creatures have to pass their lives. With us, men twice or three times as tall as we are would be inconvenienced by their own proper weight; the greater stability given by their four legs to quadrupeds allows them to attain larger proportions. In water the size of animals can be still further increased by the specific lightness which they thence acquire. With us, a certain number of creatures are winged; but in Mars, from the slight impediment offered by weight, all the superior animals are probably gifted with flight. For the same reason—namely, the feeble central

attraction—Mars's plants would attain a stature unknown in the whole range of our vegetable kingdom.

Further details and arguments might be produced in favour of Mars's eligibility; but it is time to return home to Earth, remembering that we, too, are a World in the Sky—a heavenly body, a shining light—from whom great things are expected by neighbouring planetarians. Only the other day, when a pair of affianced Martials were taking their evening stroll beneath the shade of trees which would overtop the loftiest pyramid of Egypt, the lady whispered to her lover, "Look at that lovely star, Terra, now rising from Newton's Ocean. How bright and pure she looks! a world of innocence, a paradise whose inmates are not yet driven out, the seat of an unceasing golden age! Oh, that we had the wings of a comet, that we might fly away together and be at rest there! Happy, happy Terra, whose inhabitants drink only of the crystal brook; where universal honesty reigns supreme, and cheating, in all its forms, is unknown; where no hurricanes strew the seas with wrecks and the land with ruins; where wicked and bloody wars are unheard of; where husband and wife remain for ever united in harmony; divorce courts are unknown; and no young lady ever brought an action for breach of promise of marriage, because so shameful a breach has never occurred!"

"Terra is certainly beautiful," replied the swain. "As you say, she is a lovely star. Still, let us strive to be contented and happy where we are, on Mars, without too much repining at our lot. Perhaps, as far as Terra is concerned"—he is a bit of an astronomer, and possesses a particularly good telescope—"perhaps, if truth were known, 'tis distance lends enchantment to the view."

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK IV. THE FURTHER CONFESSION OF DORIS.

CHAPTER IV. THE CHOICE OF A PROFESSION.

BASIL having furnished me with my letter of introduction, I went to call upon Mr. Toomer Hooton, who was living, it appeared, very near to us, in Cirencester-place, Fitzroy-square.

I had explained to Basil my determina-

tion to attempt the profession of the stage. I did not conceal either from him or from myself, that I felt no special aptitude for the calling, although I believed that it might bring reward of a moderate kind fairly within my reach; and with such a result I undertook to be content. I never pretended for a moment that I was possessed of histrionic genius; but I credited myself, in my vanity, with tolerable intelligence, a measure of courage, and personal appearance of an agreeable kind. I knew, moreover, that my utterance was distinct, and that my voice was not deficient in strength. It seemed to me that I could really acquit myself as well as many actresses I had seen, whose efforts upon the scene had been rewarded with excessive applause, and, as I had heard, with most liberal salaries.

Basil offered little opposition to my plan, although his looks expressed disapproval of it, and I could see that he was not hopeful of my success.

"If you are really bent upon this thing, Doris——"

"I am quite bent upon it."

"Somehow I feel that it should not be, and yet I can say no word against it. What is Paul's opinion?"

"He does not object. He laughs; he thinks I shall soon tire of my occupation. He calls me a good little wife, and a brave little wife, for trying to help him. He blames himself for being so poor, and for bringing so much trouble upon me. But that is absurd, of course."

"He looks forward to your success?"

"I cannot say that. He does not think highly of our English stage. He says we appropriate too much from his compatriots, and badly use what we borrow or steal. It is like ill-gotten gold, it does not thrive in our hands. He complains that our players are not artists, but merely tradespeople. He is severe upon English actresses. They do not understand, he says, how to dress, or how to put on their rouge even. I hope to benefit by his criticisms; but he only laughs when I apply to him for particular instruction. He says that I shall be quite good enough, too good, indeed, for my public. And then he declares that Great Britain is the land of bad taste! I feel that my love of country should be roused, and that I ought to scold him for his rudeness. But, in truth, I am too well pleased to find him light-hearted. So that he laughs, I am satisfied.

"Yet he classes acting as one of the fine-arts?"

"I have heard him say so."

"If he thought you an artist, really qualified to win fame upon the stage——"

"That is not at all his view of me; nor is it my opinion of myself. It is simply poverty that drives me to the stage. Vanity influences me but little; genius certainly does not inspire me. With me acting is a *métier*, mere mercantilisme, as Paul expresses it. You understand, Basil?"

"I am not sure that I do," he said with rather a puzzled air; "but that need make no difference. So that you and Paul understand it, and each other, and are content, there is nothing more to be said."

Accordingly, he wrote the letter for me to take to Mr. Hooton. He offered, indeed, to accompany me on my visit to the elocutionist, the better to enlist his sympathies on my behalf. But I preferred to go alone. I feared I should be rather hampered by the presence of Basil. He was inclined sometimes to be rather oppressively discreet, and meditative, and circumspect.

I found Mr. Hooton the occupant of small and shabby lodgings on the ground-floor. He was attired in a very smart dressing-gown, of a Turkish pattern, bound round him by a tasselled cord, and with a gold-embroidered scarlet smoking-cap perched upon the top of his head. I perceived afterwards, that in this way he adroitly concealed the baldness with which time had afflicted him. The erect tuft of hair, of which Basil had spoken to me, had wholly departed; the red cap still conveyed, however, a suggestion of a cock's comb, and he retained his resemblance to the feathered creation in regard to his curved projecting nose, his retreating chin, his thin legs with their high action, a certain flapping movement of his arms, and his method of rustling the skirts of his dressing-gown behind him, as though they had been bunches of feathers. But he was, as I judged, much stouter than when Basil had first met him. He was absurdly corpulent.

I felt at once that I should not like him in the least. His manner, I thought, was very artificial and insincere. He seemed to be always acting a part; but, no doubt, his tricks of gait, and posture, and glance, which in the first instance had been consciously assumed, were now confirmed habits, that had been grafted upon and had grown into his very nature. I detected falseness in his every movement; in his arching of his brows, in his rolling of

his eyes, in his wide smile that ploughed his whole face into creases, in his swaying to and fro of his head, in his fluttering about of his hands, to display their whiteness and the rings adorning them.

"Pray be seated, madam," he said, in an emphatic and what I may call a supersyllabic manner; and then, having affixed to his nose double gold-rimmed glasses—though I do not believe that he really needed their assistance—he proceeded to read the letter I had delivered to him. "You will excuse," he added, "the *déshabille* in which you find me, and the litter and confusion of my writing-table. But a professional man, my dear madam, a professional man is really entitled to indulgence as to these matters. My correspondence is so extensive; there are such vast interests at stake; and I own to a peculiar fervour and excitability of character. I fling my papers here, there, and everywhere. I am unable to control my emotions, and, as you see, a certain not unpicturesque effect results. Notwithstanding, I am strictly a man of business—oh dear yes, strictly a man of business. Make no mistake on that head. My books are kept with quite commercial punctuality and precision. I really pride myself upon a sort of clerklly neatness and accuracy. I like to think that I should have succeeded in mercantile pursuits, had it pleased Providence to assign me that walk of life. It is to me a gratifying reflection that in my humble way I present an instance of the combination between the man of taste, of artistic occupations, of æsthetic ideas—in short, the man of genius and the man of business. But you will understand that by that remark I would convey nothing of a vainglorious character."

I found Mr. Hooton's flow of language rather irritating, although upon any other occasion perhaps I should have held it to be amusing enough. But I wanted to speak upon the subject which had brought me to Cirencester-place. I turned from Mr. Hooton, and for a moment my eyes rested upon the wall-spaces on either side of the fireplace. Here hung in gold frames, as though they were pictures, certain old and faded-looking playbills, the dates of which I observed were carefully concealed by strips of paper pasted over them. Mr. Hooton quickly noted my proceeding.

"You are looking at those curiosities? Interesting relics of the past. Those playbills are as the milestones upon a long journey; they mark the progress of a life that has known many strange vicissitudes

and experiences, but has been always, if I may say so, devoted to my fellow-creatures in regard to their entertainment, cultivation, and amelioration. That is my first playbill. I performed Hamlet at Hull in the year—but never mind the year. My success was quite unquestionable. Here you find me impersonating Macbeth—always a favourite part of mine—at the Theatre Royal, Lyme Regis; and there I am at Winchelsea, appearing as King Lear and Jeremy Diddler on the same evening, the occasion being my benefit, under noble and distinguished patronage—a perfect bumper—quite the largest receipts ever known on that circuit. These are the records of my appearance as the Stranger, at Doncaster, during the race week; as Octavian, at Wakefield; and as Penruddock, at Leeds. I was always a favourite in the North of England. I found the audiences there remarkable for their intelligence and sound judgment. In London, I will admit, I have not met with the welcome or the encouragement due to me. I have been received, indeed, with very considerable unkindness, opposed by an infamous cabal. Alas! that it should be so; but my profession is disfigured by much jealousy and envy. I grieve to say that my appearance at Covent-garden Theatre, although I undertook merely a subordinate character, and the occasion was a ticket-benefit, was the provocation of bitter heart-burning, of rancorous enmity, on the part of those calling themselves my brother-actors. They sought to ridicule me, to drive me from the stage, and from the lawful exercise of my profession. But their machinations did not avail. The general body of the house was with me. The gallery, as one man, rose in my defence. My foes were baffled, humiliated. My vindication, my triumph was supreme. Still the struggle told upon me. The artist nature is ill fitted to cope with ungenerous combinations, with systematised opposition. I felt that I had sufficiently asserted myself. I withdrew from the conflict. I decided upon retiring from the stage, not absolutely, but still in a great degree. I felt that another and a special field was open to me. I would turn my acquirements to an educational account. Skilled myself, I would impart my skill to others. An actor, I would create actors. I would teach the young idea how to shout, if it is permitted me to vary the expression of the poet. Always distinguished for my elocutionary excellence, I would instruct others

in their turn to be elocutionary. And so, my dear madam, we come down to the present time, and I have the pleasure of receiving you in this unpretending yet not wholly uncomfortable abode. Let me see;" and he turned again to the letter, holding it in his left hand and striking it with his right so as to open it more completely. I remembered that on the stage the reading of a letter was invariably treated in that fashion.

"Doubleday? Oh dear yes! I remember the name perfectly. Your father, of course. And you are the sister of my young friend Basil. The married sister, I see; you are Madame Riel. And you wish to be an actress. We might call you Mademoiselle Riel, with a telling christian-name, Joséphine, or Angélique, or Antoinette. Mademoiselle Antoinette Riel would look very well indeed upon a placard. And if you were to speak English with a French accent—not a difficult task by any means—I do think we might manage to hit the taste of the public. I do think we might."

There was the sound as of some one or more jumping heavily on the floor above.

"Do not be alarmed," said Mr. Hooton, blandly; "it is only Madame Frascati, who is giving a lesson overhead. Perhaps you noticed her little brass plate on the door-post as you entered? No? Madame Frascati teaches dancing, deportment, calisthenics, the Indian club exercises, and so forth. She is a woman of very distinguished ability; her system of instruction is most admirable. She offers peculiar advantages to her pupils. But why should I disguise the fact? Madame Frascati is in truth my wife, being the fourth lady who has done me the honour to become Mrs. Toomer Hooton." He flourished before me his left hand; three wedding-rings, worn in life, as I assumed, by the three departed Mrs. Hootons, circled one of his fingers. "It is not every man," he continued, "who can make the proud boast that he has been devotedly loved by four angels, four ministering angels. I sometimes fancy that they are all watching over, protecting, and cherishing me, hovering about me, like—like guiding stars in fact, or will-o'-the-wisps—that kind of thing." A heavy bump on the floor over our heads demonstrated the material presence of his fourth wife on the premises. "She retains her professional name. We thought that advisable and excusable. We are thus enabled to be mutually useful, to play into each other's

hands, if I may so express myself. She always advises her pupils to study elocution and rhetoric, to seek my services as dramatic agent, or whenever they desire the removal of labial or lingual impediments, the defects of stammering, stuttering, &c. For my part, I recommend all who come to me to avail themselves of Madame Frascati's peculiar arts. Dancing is not merely an admirable accomplishment, it is really indispensable to the actor. If you have to appear as Letitia Hardy, my dear madam, you must perfect yourself in the graceful minuet de la cour. Juliana, in the *Honeymoon*, is required to figure in a country dance. Of other heroines, hornpipes, I think, are demanded. But I need say no more; the thing is so obvious. Throw out the chest by means of calisthenics and the Indian clubs, and then, I, as professor of elocution, will teach you how to throw out the voice."

I told him that I did not need Madame Frascati's services, that I had learnt dancing and undergone calisthenic exercises during my long stay in Bath. And then I endeavoured to bring him back to the subject of Basil's letter. How soon, I asked, having the benefit of his instructions, should I be able to make my appearance on the stage?

"You are quite a woman of business, I see," he said. "You inherit your poor father's clear intelligence and practical way of looking at things. He had a very engaging manner, I always thought. I had the pleasure of instructing him in elocution. He was kind enough to say that he had derived great benefit from my services. Of course he had commenced his course of study at rather an advanced period of life. But he was merely studying en amateur. He had a pleasant voice, not strong, but decidedly musical. I don't pretend to say that had he taken to the stage he would have attained to a position of any great fame. But he would have been esteemed by the more refined among the audience, and probably would have been thought deserving of a small salary. I met him first in—" he checked himself as though discovering that his speech was indiscreet, "but that is a detail I need not discuss. We both had occasion to seek seclusion for a time, and we chanced to encounter each other. A very pleasant man; amiable, genial, and remarkably well-informed. It is very agreeable to me to reflect that I made his acquaintance. I am proud to think that he was once my

pupil. I shall never cease to regret his untimely loss. Poor dear Doubleday!"

Mr. Hooton affected—it was undoubtedly affectation—to be staying the flow of tears. He dabbed his dry eyes with a scented cambric handkerchief.

"But you, my dear young lady," he resumed presently, "more ambitious than your father, contemplate a serious début; you would become a professional actress. I shall be happy to assist you, both for your own sake and for your father's sake, and upon moderate terms. What do you take to be the special inclination of your talents? Are you a votary of *Thalia* or of *Melpomene*? Your face is, I think, of a serious cast. Your air and manner appeal readily to sympathy. Your voice, I notice, has a certain tone or throb of melancholy. What we call juvenile tragedy should be your line of business, as we phrase it. Let me hear you read these delightful passages from my favourite bard."

He handed me a very soiled and dog-eared and tobacco-scented volume of Shakespeare, open at the balcony scene in *Romeo and Juliet*. I was nervous and ill at ease, and my voice faltered a little; but I was determined not to be abashed, and I read as boldly as I could, in a theatrical manner. I knew the speeches of Juliet by heart, so that I had no need to keep my eye fixed upon my book. I tried to discover the effect of my performance upon Mr. Hooton.

He took a chair at the farther end of the room, draped his dressing-gown about him, folded his arms, and assumed altogether a judicial attitude. Sometimes he gazed at me fixedly, as though determined to intimidate me; then he shut his eyes, and indulged in a sort of rapt simper, expressive of his appreciation of the exquisite poetry of Shakespeare; presently I found him wincing and frowning, as a musician might at the sound of a false note.

"Really, you know, that's not so bad, my dear young lady; not so very bad. You want instruction, I need hardly say. You take your breath in the wrong places; you are not sufficiently articulate; and you neglect that golden rule of elocution, which prescribes the elevation and not the lowering of the voice when you come to a comma. But, altogether, it's really by no means bad. Allow me."

He took the book from me and read the scene over again, in a very stilted, artificial, and affected manner.

"That's rather more like the real thing,"

he said, with a self-satisfied smile, as he jauntily tossed the book from him.

I did not much like his method of reading, yet I felt that it had the merit of distinctness at any rate. I noticed, too, that his elocution was of the kind that usually obtained applause at the theatre.

How soon, I asked again, did he think I should be able to appear creditably upon the stage?

"That is a difficult question," he said, "although it is one often put to me. Success in the profession of the stage depends upon so many conditions. It is not absolutely a matter of calculation, and yet it can really be almost counted upon and provided, so to say, at a certain cost." He looked at me significantly as he spoke, but I did not quite understand him. "You see, it's a plain matter, after all. If we want a crop of turnips, we must sow turnip-seed in good time. If we would reap a harvest of bank-notes, well, we must take care to plant our sovereigns in due season."

"How much money will be required. Mr. Hooton? Please tell me that." I thought it best to speak plainly.

"A woman of business—as I said," he exclaimed, with an approving smile. "Now let me see. You're not rich? No. I thought not. Your poor father admitted to me, on more than one occasion, that his circumstances were not all he could wish, and that he had little to bequeath to his children beyond his pecuniary embarrassments. You want to arrive at a professional position, per saltum, as we say in the Latin tongue? Well, now what shall be our terms? How will this do? Twenty pounds down, and that shall include elocutionary instruction, sufficient rehearsals, and a début guaranteed at the Soho Theatre, in a leading Shakesperian character? Come now, I call that a good offer."

"Twenty pounds? That is a large sum."

"Yes, but a leading Shakesperian part! It's really dirt cheap. But of course I could find you a smaller and more economical kind of opening, if you think you would like that better. Let me consult my books. I have several performances in prospect, supported by my pupils and aided by myself. I do all I can to oblige them. I am content myself to fill minor characters, if my protégés are bent

upon leading business. I am without ambition in the matter. If a young gentleman is resolved upon playing Othello, I content myself with Iago, and vice versa. Let me see. Macbeth on the 25th, but the cast is nearly complete. You would not care, perhaps, about Donaldbain or Fleance? They're thought to be nice leg parts for beginners; well suited to young ladies who like to wear a kilt, without much to say. Or what do you think of the Gentlewoman? really a very telling little character. We could do that for you at say thirty shillings. Would you like Celia, in *As You Like It*, for two pounds? Or Hero, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, at the same price? Or there's Lady Anne, in *Richard the Third*—fixed for the 15th of next month—at two pounds fifteen? Now that's really a good opportunity. A nice part with a cheap and becoming dress, for, with a few yards of crape, you can make any old black silk do for the train. You don't like it? I am afraid I've nothing to suit you, then. But, take my advice; do it well while you're about it. You'll find the money well laid. Twenty pounds down, and please yourself: Shakespeare's Juliet, or Julia in the *Hunchback*. I've known many excellent engagements result from merely one appearance in a good part, at the Soho—the performance being under my direction."

PROSPECTIVE ARRANGEMENTS.

On Monday, the 2nd of July, will be published the

EXTRA SUMMER NUMBER

OF

ALL THE YEAR ROUND,

CONSISTING OF

SEVENTY-TWO PAGES

(The amount of Three Regular Numbers), stitched in a wrapper,

PRICE SIXPENCE,

And containing Complete Stories by

WILKIE COLLINS

AND OTHER POPULAR WRITERS.

Arrangements have been made for the commencement, in October, of

A NEW SERIAL STORY,

BY

ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.